

Waterloo Region Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic

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Category: Organizational Policies	Number: OR: 014
Title: Patient Complaints	
Issued: June 2020	Adopted and Approved:
Associated Forms: Authorization to Release Confidential Information	Revised and Approved: Oct 2022, Nov 2023, January 2025, June 2026
Page(s): 1 of 3	Date of Next Review:

PURPOSE

To ensure that any patient of Waterloo Region Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic (WRNPLC), past or present, has the right to fair process in providing feedback and/or to file a complaint without fear of reprisal and that respondents are appropriately informed of allegations and are given the opportunity to respond. This policy and procedure will always be available, and a copy will be provided to any individual if requested.

SCOPE

All WRNPLC employees, patients, students, and volunteers. For the purposes of this policy, the term "complaint" includes any complaint, concern, feedback, or expression of dissatisfaction regarding services, treatment, access to care, staff conduct, or any other aspect of WRNPLC operations.

POLICY

Complaints may include but are not limited to:

- a termination or denial of clinic services; and/or
- the quality of clinic services; and/or
- quality of treatment, including failure to reasonably accommodate; and/or
- conduct against them by a member of the staff.

Patient complaints may be made by the individual or their substitute decision maker or representative. Only complaints made in writing will be responded to. Anonymous complaints will not be considered.

Waterloo Region *Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic*

Patient Complaints

Complaints from patients will be taken seriously and will be investigated promptly. All complaints will be considered on their merits, and there will be no victimization of a complainant. Ongoing care or provision of services will not be affected by the presence of a complaint.

All complaints will be dealt with in confidence. Patient information will be shared with only those staff who need to know.

Complaints must be submitted within one year of the incident or concern becoming known to the complainant or WRNPLC.

Complaints regarding established WRNPLC policies, procedures, or operational decisions may be reviewed however, the complaints process is not intended to appeal or overturn approved organizational policies. In these cases, the complainant will be provided with information regarding the rationale for the policy or decision.

PROCEDURE/PROCESS

*Any staff member who receives a complaint is empowered to resolve it immediately and informally as they are able.

All complaints must be submitted using the Patient Feedback and Complaint Form available on the WRNPLC website. Staff receiving a complaint will direct the complainant to the online form. Upon request, a paper copy of the form may be provided and submitted to clinic admin staff for processing.

Complaints submitted through the website form will be responded to in writing within four (4) weeks.

If the complaint is against the Clinical Lead, the Executive Director will review the complaint and coordinate any follow-up. If the complaint is against the Executive Director, the Clinical Lead will review the complaint and coordinate any follow-up. If a conflict of interest exists, the Board Chair may designate an alternate individual to review the complaint.

The Executive Director (or Clinical Lead if complaint pertains to ED) will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and offer to provide a copy of this policy.

If the complaint is resolved, the outcome shall be documented in an incident report and/or the patient's chart, as appropriate.

Waterloo Region *Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic*

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If the complaint is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, the matter may be escalated to the Chair of the Board of Directors. External advisors or professionals may be engaged as required to assist in resolving the matter.

No confidential information shall be disclosed to the Board of Directors or any external party without the written authorization of the complainant, unless required by law.

Rights of Complainant

A complainant who wishes to pursue a formal complaint shall be provided with a copy of this policy and procedure. The complainant's rights during the complaints process include:

- The right to make a complaint in writing. A representative or substitute decision-maker may assist the complainant with their complaint.
- The right to privacy/confidentiality.
- The right to receive a final report and recommendations relating to the complaint.